The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

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BELLS ACROSS THE SNOW.

O Christmas, merry Christmas!
  Is it really come again
With its memories and greetings,
  With its joy and with its pain?
There's a minor in the carol,
  And a shadow in the light,
And a spray of cypress twining
  With the holly wreath to-night.
And the hush is never broken
  By laughter light and low,
As we listen in the starlight
  To the bells across the snow.

O Christmas, merry Christmas!
  'Tis not so very long
Since other voices blended
  With the carol and the song!
If we could but hear them singing
  As they are singing now,
If we could but see the radiance
  Of the crown on each dear brow,
There would be no sigh to smother,
  No hidden tear to flow,
As we listen in the starlight
  To the bells across the snow.

O Christmas, merry Christmas!
  This nevermore can be;
We cannot bring again the days
  Of our unshadowed glee.
But Christmas, happy Christmas,
  Sweet herald of good will,
With holy songs of glory
  Brings holy gladness still;
For peace and hope may brighten,
  And patient love may glow,
As we listen in the starlight
  To the bells across the snow.

—*Frances Ridley Havergal.*

CHRISTMAS.

"Christmas Day!
When angels looking down with tender smile,
As hymns rise up to heaven on Christmas morn,
Know Love one day earth's jars must reconcile,
  Since Christ was born!"

It has been aptly remarked that Christian thought is philosophy with the chill off. Unconscious acknowledgment of the truth of this saying underlies the beautiful feeling of joyousness and thankfulness which pervades Christendom in that period of the year when it celebrates the birth of the Saviour. There is during that time no chill in the moral atmosphere of Christian countries and Christian homes, be their climatic conditions what they may. Human faces always brighten at the very mention of the word "Christmas." It is a time when with great appropriateness the churches are decorated, joyous peals are rung upon their bells, and a deeper feeling of good fellowship than exists at any other time of the year somehow gets diffused among all sections of society. Old and young, rich and poor, the cultured and the unlearned, seem possessed by a common feeling of welcome to the season, without staying to bethink themselves why or wherefore. All obey a common impulse to present to view the best side of their characters, and to diffuse a spirit of cheerfulness to the utmost extent in their power in every circle which they enter. If the churl or the cynic ever feels ashamed of his growling temper, surely it must be when he sees and hears all around him, as he cannot help seeing

and hearing at Christmas, signs and tokens of abounding good will and warm-heartedness,—

"When hands, that hardly keep grim want at bay,
Deck holly round each shelf and picture frame;
While those who toil make merry, since to-day
The Christ-child came!"

To eulogize Christianity in this era of history would be like singing praises of the orb of day. Yet who, when the festival of the Nativity comes round, can help meditating on all the blessings which our divine religion has conferred upon mankind? Who can help recognizing its "ineffable look of uniqueness"? Contemplating what it has already achieved, we are thence led to forecast the glories of its future. The name of Jesus and his character win an influence ever widening with the process of the suns. It is ten thousand times greater now than it ever was before, and it is still cumulating with the ages. It has been well said that, whilst heathenism was a seeking religion and Judaism the hoping religion, Christianity is the reality of what heathenism sought and Judaism hoped for. It has survived philosophy after philosophy, government after government, and it will survive all the other great religions of the earth.

The power of the cross has been set forth by Heine in a passage which may be here fitly reproduced. After quoting the Homeric description of the feasting gods, he continues, "Then suddenly approached, panting, a pale Jew, with drops of blood on his brow, with a crown of thorns on his head, and a great cross laid across his shoulders; and he threw the cross on the high table of the gods, so that the golden cups tottered, and the gods became dumb and pale, and grew ever paler, till at last into vapor they melted away." The power of that cross is still shaping the course of human history. He who was "rightly named the Son of God in that he revealed God to man, and the Son of Man in that he revealed man to himself, in that he revealed the glorious possibilities of man's nature, the divinity of the human," has become the spiritual light of the world. Great and good men had lived before him, and had taught some truth. But they were imperfect: they could not live the truth they taught. It was the supreme distinction of Jesus that he could and did live the truth he taught, and hereby his life became the light of men. Moreover, he has spoken the word that shall meet ultimate as well as present spiritual needs of humanity. He has thus become the Messiah of the whole race, the central figure of all past, present, and future history. Plainly, his career of conquest is only begun.

"What though the shouts of sin and self be heard
By men awhile, above his gentle word;
What though his path of suffering and of loss
Leads from the cradle to the martyr's cross,
Yet by his hand shall war's last flag be furled,
And Christ, the Prince of Peace, rule all the world."

Summing up all in a word, it may be truly affirmed that the history of Christianity is the history of the wondrous might inherent in one personality. Christ brought into the world, beyond and above the heavenly truth he taught, new life for human souls. In a memorable utterance—"I came that they may have life, and may have it abundantly"—he seemed to indicate his consciousness that this was one part of his mission. Nothing vitalizes a man's whole moral being so surely and effectively as personal love toward personal beings. Nothing is so competent as this to create motive power. No belief in abstract propositions or principles can ever develop greatness or nobleness of character so certainly as does the influence of one personality upon another.

What is Christianity but one continuous illustration of the power of a living faith in Christ to produce fruits of mercy, and at the same time to give true rest to the soul? "To know Christ," once said George Macdonald, "is to me liberty and life." And millions upon millions of Christian believers in every generation would have been ready to say the same thing with their whole heart. It has often been asserted that, as Christian history is only a link in a process of development, its founder cannot be allowed any peculiar or unique position. In reply to this, it has been well pointed out by Prof. Harnack that history reveals the transcendent power of personality in development, and that the beginning of the higher religious development is a personality quite unique,—that of Christ. "Of him alone we know that those who ate and drank with him glorified him not only as their Teacher, but also

as the Prince of Life, as the living power of their existence: *it is not I that live, but Christ in me.*" With the professor we say that criticism, while altering our views of details, has changed in no way the main lineaments of Christ's personality or teaching. He remains the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. Hence there is no arrest upon our gladness of heart when, at every recurring of Christmas, we raise our songs of praise and thanksgiving to God for his unspeakable goodness to men manifested in the advent of the Saviour.

"O star of human faith and hope,
Thy light shall lead us on
Until it fades in morning's glow
And heaven on earth is won."

—*The Christian Life.*

THE STILL HOUR.

A CHRISTMAS PRAYER.

Lord, for the lonely heart
I pray apart;
Now, for the son of sorrow
Whom this to-morrow
Rejoiceth not, O Lord,
Hear my weak word.

For lives too bitter to be borne,
For the tempted and the torn,
For the prisoner in the cell,
For the shame lip doth not tell,
For the haggard suicide,
Peace, peace, this Christmas-tide!

Into the desert, trod
By the long sick, O God;
Into the patient gloom
Of that small room
Where lies the child of pain,—
Of all neglected most,—be fain
To enter, healing, and remain.

Now, at the fall of day,
I bow and pray;
For those who cannot sleep,
A watch I keep;
Oh, let the starving brain
Be fed and fed again;
At thy behest
The tortured nerve find rest.

I see the vacant chair;
Father of souls, prepare
My poor thoughts' feeble power
To plead, this hour:

For the empty, aching home
Where the silent footsteps come,
Where the unseen face looks on,
Where the hand-clasp is not felt,
Where the dearest eyes are gone,
Where the portrait on the wall
Stirs and struggles as to speak,
Where the light breath from the hall
Calls the color to the cheek,
Where the voice breaks in the hymn
When the sunset burneth dim,
Where the late, large tear will start,
Frozen by the broken heart,
Where the lesson is to learn
How to live, to grieve, to yearn,
How to bear and how to bow,—
Oh, the Christmas that is fled!
Lord of living and of dead,
Comfort Thou!

—*Elizabeth Stuart Phelps Ward*, 1893.

A PRAYER FOR CHRISTMAS DAY.

Almighty God, whom through Thy son Jesus Christ we have come to know as the Father, we thank Thee for the revelation of Thyself in his word and life. We thank Thee that Thou hast set him before us as the Master we should follow, as the Teacher from whom we should continually seek instruction in spiritual truth, as the Brother whose example should bind us with sweet bonds of love to all our human kind. Help us at this time, we beseech Thee, that we be not forgetful of the high duties of charity to which he has called us, but that we praise his name and glorify Thee with faithfulness to Thy holy Spirit which dwelt in him so richly. O God, who art the Father of all mankind, lay upon us the dignity and humility of Christian disciples, and fill our minds and hearts with the wisdom and love of Jesus. Amen.—*The Christian Life.*

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

[*Send all offers and requests for this department to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 2 Kensington Park, Roxbury, Mass.*]

BEFORE WRITING TO ASK FOR BOOKS, DO NOT FAIL TO READ THE FOLLOWING DIRECTIONS.

1. If you see a book offered in the Book Club which you desire to read, write directly to the address of the person who offers it. If she receives more than one request, the addresses of those to whom she cannot respond may be sent to the Book Club, and the request printed there.

2. If you have a book or paper to give or lend, write directly to the Book Club, as above, and offer it with your address.

3. In sending a book, enclose, when possible, a P.O. card for response, already addressed.

4. In thanking the person who has sent you a book, always mention the name of the book. Say, "I have received 'Black Beauty,'" or whatever the book may be, not, "I have received *that book*." This saves a busy person a good deal of time. Otherwise she must consult her list constantly to find out what book has been received safely.

N.B.—Do not send books to the Book Club. Send only the *offer* to the club. To send the *book* involves packing it *twice* and paying postage *twice*, where once would suffice.

Those who offer books frequently receive notes, saying, "Shall I return you this book, or keep it, or pass it on?" *Unless otherwise stated*, all books offered in this department are *given*, and the postage paid.

Please remember, when you see a request for a book in the Book Club, to write a card to Mrs. Nichols, asking, "*Shall* I send such a book to such a person?" before sending it, else the person who requests it may receive several copies. When any one writes directly to you, asking for a book offered by you, send a card to Mrs. Nichols, saying that you *have* sent it. When you receive more requests than you can meet, send these to the Book Club to be printed there.

Please write only on one side of the paper in sending lists or letters to the secretary.

OFFERS.

Will any one who would like to receive "Black Beauty," address Miss Langmaid, 71 Newbury Street, Boston, Mass.?

Any one desiring school-books please apply to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 2 Kensington Park, Roxbury, Mass.

The Cambridge Branch offers the following books. Address Miss M. A. Vinal, 20 Lowell Street, Cambridge, Mass.

Miscellaneous.

"Gray Days and Gold in England and Scotland"; "Races and Peoples"; "Titan, A Romance," Jean Paul; "The Song of Hiawatha," Longfellow; "How to amuse the Children"; "Soldiers Three," Kipling; "Paul and Virginia"; "Tracks in Norway"; "North and South," Mrs. Gaskell; "From Colony to Commonwealth"; "Art Instruction in Primary Schools"; "The Passion Play at Oberammergau"; "Chevreul on Colors."

Juvenile.

"Pepper and Salt; or, Seasoning for Young Folks"; "Baby World"; "Frank Leslie's Christmas Book"; "Deeds Worth Telling"; "Wide Awake" (1884); "First Book of Birds," Olive Thorne Miller; "Child Stories and Rhymes"; "Little Wanderers"; "Ned in the Block House," Ellis; "Holiday House"; "Little Bermuda"; "Yan and Nochie of Tappan Sea"; Butler's "Elementary Geography"; Frye's "Primary Geography."

REQUESTS.

[*Read directions at beginning of Book Club before writing.*]

Those who send offers and requests for the Book Club will do us a kindness by noting the following suggestions: 1. Please write very clearly. 2. Do not use a pencil. 3. Do not use contractions, especially names of States (as Cal. and Col. for California, Colorado). 4. Write on one side only of the paper. 5. Do not forget to give your full address. (The State is now and then omitted.) 6. Do not send matter for the Book Club to Miss Clarke, but to Mrs. Nichols, the Book Club Secretary

Those who write to us for the first time must send the name and address of a minister as a reference. Without that the request will not be printed.

1. I want to thank all who have remembered me in the past. I do not receive anything now, but would like to get some good standard books, *The Ladies' Home Journal*, and some good children's books. My health is worse than ever before. I am just recovering from an attack of illness. Viola Hardegree, Winder, Georgia, R. F. D. No. 19.

2. J. F. Davis, 201 South Harrell Street, Charlotte, North Carolina, asks for works of Andrew Murray, F. B. Meyer, Baptists' History, etc.

3 Mrs. G. E. Flowers, Granite Falls, North Carolina, requests *World's Work*.

4. I want to ask you to please send me some reading for myself and husband. We have no books at all. I would be glad to have a Bible and any other reading. We have been married about thirteen months. My husband has white swelling, and is a great sufferer. We are very poor, live on rented land, pay half we make for the land and stock, and my husband is down so much of the time that we are in a very hard place and are not able to buy anything to read. Anything you may send will be thankfully received and passed on to others, for there are many round who would be thankful for reading. Mrs. Tom Maze, Nettle Ridge, Virginia.

5. The first week in November I shall move from my old home, Columbia, South Carolina, to the country, and my new address will be Newberry, R. F. D. No. 4, South Carolina. Will my friends please send me any magazines dealing with art and literary subjects? I am particularly interested in the lives and works of artists, sculptors, and authors. Being altogether shut-in, I have little pleasure outside of my reading and writing. Margaret A. Richard.

6. *Dear Cheerful Letter Friends,*—I am planning to have a Christmas tree for the children of my neighborhood, and, if any of you who can will send books, pictures, or cards, we will be so grateful; also magazines and illustrated papers will be appreciated. Mrs. J. Porter, Doerun, Colquitt County, Georgia, R. F. D. No. 3.

7. I am a woman of limited means and would be proud of any good reading for my little boy, who is just learning to read. I thank those that have already sent me reading, for my husband and I both like to read. I have been receiving *The Ladies' Home Journal*, also *Collier's Weekly*, for which I thank those who sent them. My husband would be proud of any kind of literature that would be of any assistance to him in studying book-keeping. We live twenty-five miles from a railroad station in a small town of about one hundred inhabitants. Mrs. Sulie Tadlock, Reck, Indian Territory.

8. Will you please send us some reading? We would be glad to receive "Stepping Heavenward"; "Outlines of the World's History," Swinton; "Lady Rose's Daughter"; "First History of the United States," by Chambers. Mother is almost helpless with rheumatism. You all have been *very* good to send us reading matter for several years, but of late we have not had any. Address Mrs. Ellen Oliver, Franklin, North Carolina.

9. A friend of mamma's has introduced me to your society. I am just a little country girl aged twelve. I have never had a brother or sister, just papa and mamma, until last year my aged grand-parents came to live with us. Grandmother is an invalid and cannot walk, and she likes to read, and we have so little worth reading in this remote neighborhood. Will some one be kind enough to send me the Pansy books and any other literature suitable for a girl of my age? And please send my grandmother reading, too. She is a member of the Methodist Church. Stella P. Snapp, Buchanan, Virginia.

10. Do you know of any one who does not care for her old numbers of *St. Nicholas*, and would kindly let me have them? or numbers of any art journals, that I might have the pictures for children's scrap-books. It is so difficult to find something for the children's idle hours, when winter time is on us, and the scrap-book would be instructive. I would appreciate the favor more than I can say. Mrs. Minnie L. Gest, Morrow, Ohio.

11. Mrs. George Brown, Critz, Virginia, will be glad of any reading.

12. Rev. Mary T. Whitney, Green Harbor, Mass., would like for her class work this winter three or four copies of any good life of Mary, Queen of Scots, and a Green's "History of England." Also the library there is always glad to receive good novels, histories, biographies, etc.

13. Mrs. Mattie Frizzell, Frankston, Texas, asks for "Ben-Hur."

Mrs. James A. Tyner, Collinsville, Indian Territory, thanks all who have sent books and magazines for herself and the library in which she is interested. She is especially grateful for the book, "Characteristics of Women," recently received with torn wrapper, and no clew to the sender. It is a book she has very much wished to have.

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

FORGETFULNESS IN CHILDREN.

I have been very much interested in the story of the forgetful girl in the *Cheerful Letter*, and it may be helpful to some mothers to know how my mother dealt with that fault in me. I do not think I ever disobeyed wilfully, though I often did so thoughtlessly, sometimes doing two minutes afterward what she had told me expressly not to do. "I forgot," was my constant and truthful plea. Mother would say very impressively, with uplifted finger: "But you *must not forget.* When I tell you to do a thing (or not to do it), you must remember." This was true in principle, for we *can* make ourselves remember anything on which we fix our thoughts; but, when the habit of forgetting has been formed, the child needs its mother's help just as much as she does when sick or suffering from accident.

I remember one occasion when I had done something that she had told me again and again not to do, and the last time I did it the result was very disastrous. She came to the door of the room where I was sitting, and I showed her calmly what I had done. Then she said solemnly:—

"Now I am going to punish you, not for the accident, for I know you didn't mean to do that, but for disobedience." I felt that I did deserve punishment, and I felt willing

to bear it if it would help me to remember. I walked bravely up to her and stood perfectly still, waiting for the shower of blows which was her way of fulfilling Solomon's injunction as to the use of the rod. To my surprise—for it was a very rare thing for her not to fulfil a threat—she did not punish me, but, sitting down in one chair, put me in the next, while she talked to me very seriously about my careless habits and the trouble which they would cause me and others if I did not overcome them.

I think she saw in my face real penitence and a determination to do better in the future. I am sure that the grave and loving words did me far more good than a whipping would have done, and I never did that careless deed again. If my mother had always been as kind and as wise as she was that night, I should have been a better woman to-day than I am. Unfortunately, she was very impulsive, saying and doing whatever occurred to her at the moment. To her and to my father every word of the Bible was a direct command from God, and God, through Solomon, had commanded the use of the rod.

Though I do not recommend whipping, I believe that almost any affectionate child would submit humbly and patiently to a little strapping if *prefaced*, not followed, by a loving talk. "I do it to help you to overcome your faults," will be believed if said *before* the punishment; but it is not of the slightest use to fly into a passion and punish a child, evidently delighting in the pain that you inflict, and then, when your passion begins to subside and you feel ashamed of yourself, to tell the child that you did it in love and for his own sake. He knows, though he may not dare to say, that it is not true.

(*To be continued.*)

[The editor ventures to remark, apropos of Solomon, that his system did not succeed with his own son, Rehoboam, which throws some discredit on that method of government.]

NATURAL HISTORY.

MRS. WISTER'S CATS (*continued*).

One of Princess's kittens, which I gave away, but constantly saw, showed great resemblance to her mother in character, being proud, capricious, morbid, and refined. She was spoiled to such a degree that at length she would eat only fish or game, and in summer, when her owners were away and those delicacies were not forthcoming, she lived exclusively on milk and melons. But, though treated with such indulgence, she was never particularly petted, and her affections did not develop. Most of the others were ordinary, commonplace specimens of their race.

Princess was the only female cat I have seen do battle, except in defence of her young, though they now and then have domestic squabbles. The Major was a formidable champion, yet, when I have run out to the rescue of some kitchen or stable cat of his own sex, whom he seemed to be killing, he would roll on the ground, looking at me over his shoulder with lackadaisical amiability, but not releasing his foe. Neither he nor, as far as I have seen, any of the males showed the least rage in fighting, and would purr and arch their backs the moment the contest was over.

The supposed cowardice of cats is a relative term: they are not constitutionally brave like dogs, but they are courageous among themselves, even to attacking those of much greater size and strength, and are frightfully cut and bitten in consequence. They fear no rat, though sometimes overmatched. They will often fly at a stray dog of any size and drive him off, and a cat with kittens is a small lioness. Maltreated cats fear human beings, and all mine have shown as much discrimination as dogs between well and ill dressed strangers, except that, while the dog becomes aggressive, the cat runs away: no tramp or pedler can come within reach of them. They seem to have the same curious instinctive fear that horses exhibit of the unknown or the uncanny, setting up their backs or crouching at a black cloak thrown in a heap, or even at a large, ill-defined shadow. Czarina, a peculiarly timid creature, was terrified by the alternation of light and shadow on the wall, if a lamp or candle were carried by. I have seen them excessively frightened at the sight of little children, or negroes, with whom they were unfamiliar. Some of them have shown alarm at a strange sound in the air, such as the singing of the telegraph wire. In this, as in many other respects, the fine, complex organization tells on the disposition.—*S. B. Wister, in Temple Bar.*

THE HORSE AND THE EMPRESS.

Count P., who is one of the wealthiest magnates in Hungary, and who breeds

horse-flesh on a very extensive scale, owned in 1878 a magnificent coal-black stallion possessed of so fiendish a temper that for six months his grooms had been unable to enter his box, and were forced to feed him from pails provided with six-foot-long handles. The empress* heard of this, and would not rest until we had driven over to see the count, or, much rather, to see the count's restive pensioner. No prayers or entreaties could prevail when the empress had once made up her mind, and so, *nolens volens*, our host was forced to conduct us to the farther corner of his superb stable where "Black Devil"—such was the amiable animal's name—reigned supreme.

Without a minute's hesitation, and disregarding the exclamation of horror from the on-lookers, Elizabeth walked deliberately to the box, and, chirruping in a peculiar manner to its occupant, she drew back the bolt and coolly entered. Those present held their breath, expecting every moment to see the dauntless woman trampled upon and torn to pieces. No such thing, however, happened. At first the startled beast snorted and laid back its ears, but soon the great fiery eyes softened and grew tender, and the empress was suffered to pat the dilated nostrils and arched neck.

"Come here," she called out to me: "he is as gentle as a lamb, poor old boy; but he is in bad need of a brushing up!"

Where she had gone, self-respect forbade me to refuse to follow, so I promptly obeyed her command. Between us we polished up "Black Devil," and ultimately left him whinnying with fond gratitude — a vanquished tyrant! So astonished was the count, and so relieved, also, at finding that no accident had happened, that he craved permission to present the dusky beauty to her majesty. The gift was accepted, but it took a long time before the four-footed "Devil" could be induced to endure the presence of a man near him, and we had all the work we could do in attending personally to his demoniacal needs. However, the empress ended by obtaining such good mastery over him that he used to follow her about like a dog in the park and grounds of Gödöllö.—*Selected.*

* The Empress Elizabeth of Austria, who was assassinated in 1900 by an anarchist. The story is told by one of her maids of honor, a countess with an unpronounceable name. No doubt the poor horse's temper had been ruined by unkind treatment.

Traffic on Tremont Street, Boston, halts every day for a moment while a small gray squirrel goes to dinner. The little fellow makes his home in an elm that stands not far from the Park Street entrance to the subway; but some months ago he took a journey into the world, and found that the nuts served to squirrels on Boston Common were not so pleasing to his palate as the nuts provided for squirrels that live in the King's Chapel Burying-ground. Since that time he has sought his noon meal away from home, although the trip necessitates crossing two streets and taking quite a walk. But nobody bothers him, and, when the streets look dangerous, the policeman at the crossing—whom the squirrel knows as well as the officer knows him—holds up the teams until the squirrel has reached the opposite sidewalk.—*The Youth's Companion.*

THE EARL OF SHAFTESBURY.

As the years advanced, certain characteristics which had been developed in early life became more and more pronounced. "My temperament is painfully susceptible," he wrote in the autumn of this year. "I am very soon elated and as rapidly depressed, both in extremes,—at one moment in the highest joy, then in the deepest despair." Toward the close of the year he wrote:—

"*Dec. 20th* [1860].—A man verging upon sixty must expect disappointments. And so I do. Yet, nevertheless, I have many moments of aspiration and hope. Though sometimes faint and feeble almost to inanition, I am, at other times, vigorous, lively, and forward, as in the best days of my youth; and I feel a singular reluctance to withdraw from the field, dark and dismal though it be, while there appears the smallest opening to do God's service. Man must not estimate what good can be done by his own proportion of big and little. God called me to the relief of the factory population, and gave me strength accordingly. The work was great and conspicuous. He may call me to some obscure, inferior, and, humanly speaking, paltry effort. The work may be short, and without honor. Yet, at the day of final account, the last may be more than the first: 'the gleanings of the grapes of Ephraim may be worth all the vintage of Abi-ezer.'

"This is why I cannot resolve to retire,

though I see clouds gathering around, and within and without am not what I was."

While all the labors referred to in this and the preceding chapter were in progress, a great sorrow had been gnawing the heart of Lord Shaftesbury. His beloved daughter Mary had been for a long time a great sufferer from lung disease, and was gradually fading out of life. A few of the touching incidents of that long and anxious period of painful suspense we extract from the Diary:—

"*Feb.* 3*d*, 1861.—Torquay. Sunday. Took Lord's Supper with Minny. Thankful, very thankful, to have this opportunity, as we are to be separated to-morrow for a far longer time than has yet occurred in our married life. She must remain here with poor, dear Mary; and I must go to recommence the work of the session. Such will be our separation until the month of May, should God permit us to reach that period. To surrender public life and all the cares of the poor and destitute and all the physical and moral sufferings of London and mankind, merely to spare ourselves a little grief and a little anxiety, would not be right and certainly not satisfactory. I must continue my work, so long as God gives me strength, while there is work to be done, not only while it can be done in circumstances pleasant to myself.

"The solitude of my once cheerful house in London will be very great."

"*August* 10*th.*—A year and a half has Minny nursed this heart-rending malady. Her attentions, waitings, watchings, have been incessant,—wound up and let down again, in joy and despair, without intermission, repose, change. During the last few days, under singular intensity of doubt, distress, sympathy, terror, she held on until the doctor, last night, declared that he saw and entertained no hope. Then all gave way; the stream broke its banks; and power, endurance, almost vitality, ran over, and left her stranded in exhaustion and weakness. Was there ever such a nurse? Were ever judgment, tact, skill, sympathy, love, so blended and so administered before?

"*September* 3*d.*—At twenty minutes past three this morning it pleased Almighty God, by taking the soul of darling Mary to Himself, to close her indescribable sufferings."

. . . . . .

[Lord Palmerston had warned Lord Shaftesbury that there was some danger of his being defrauded by his steward.]

The catastrophe prognosticated by Lord Palmerston was not long in coming.

"*Aug.* 20*th.* [1863].—Spa. Have had various bothers of a grave kind. Have dismissed Waters, under pretence of allowing him to resign. Shall never discover my whole loss by mismanagement, peculation, trickery, and direct fraud. It has been a yearly and an occasional blunder. Twelve thousand pounds, during the twelve years I have had him, is a very low estimate. It will, I fear, be much higher."

The extent of Lord Shaftesbury's losses were never really known. They were certainly much understated in his first calculation. For many years he was to have trouble and anxiety without ceasing, lawsuits without number, and vexations endless. It was a bitter ingredient in his cup that, as the years advanced, the effort to keep free from debt became more and more difficult.

. . . . . .

The story of the sufferings of the "climbing boys" employed by chimney-sweepers reads rather like a chapter from some terrible record of the Dark Ages than a veritable chapter from the history of this enlightened century.

Little children, from four to eight years of age, the majority of them orphans, the rest bartered or sold by brutal parents, were trained to force their way up the long, narrow, winding passages of chimneys to clear away the soot. In order to do this they had to move up and down by pressing every joint in their bodies against the dark and often broken surface of the chimneys; and, to prevent their hands and knees from streaming with blood, the children were rubbed with brine before a hot fire to harden the flesh.

But the sufferings of the climbing boys did not end here. Their skin being choked in every pore, they were liable to a frightful disorder, called chimney-sweeper's (or sooty) cancer, involving one of the most terrible forms of physical suffering. They began the day's work at four, three, or even two, in the morning. They were half stifled by the hot sulphurous air in the flues. Often they would get stuck in a chimney, and faint from the effects of terror, exhaustion, and foul air; and then, if the usual remedy of lighted straw failed to "bring them round," they were often half-killed, and sometimes killed outright, by the very means used to extricate them.

Such was their work. For their "rest" they had low, ill-drained, ill-ventilated, and noisome rooms or cellars, and oftentimes slept upon the soot-heaps. For the whole week, perhaps for many weeks, they remained unwashed; and on Sundays they were generally shut up together, so that the neighbors might not see their miserable plight.

They were morally and intellectually degraded to the lowest possible point. Out of 384 boys examined by order of a Commission of Inquiry, so recently as 1864, only six could write and twenty-six could read, most of them very imperfectly.

No one can have failed to be struck by Lord Shaftesbury's dogged and indomitable perseverance. When once he made a cause his own, whatever obstacles might stand in his way, he would not

"Bate a jot
Of heart or hope, but still bear up and steer
Right onward."

Difficult as he had found it in 1840 to procure an act forbidding the employment by chimney-sweepers of climbing boys, it was a far more formidable task to prevent its evasion. After the passing of the act, it lay for some time dormant, and, when attempts were made to enforce it, the most unscrupulous devices were resorted to in order to nullify its operation. Moderate as were the proposals made by Lord Shaftesbury, there was considerable opposition to the bill, chiefly on the ground of what was alleged to be the absolute necessity in some cases of the employment of climbing boys. The bill was ultimately referred to a select committee, and thirteen witnesses were examined; but, although the cruelty of the system was fully set forth, the committee reported that it was inexpedient to proceed farther. In 1854, therefore, Lord Shaftesbury returned to the charge. He stated that in Manchester sixty master chimney-sweepers had met and testified to the degradation, cruelty, ignorance, and vice inseparable from the system, and to the readiness with which the machines could be effectually used instead of climbing boys. In London machines were almost exclusively used. The bill passed the Lords, but was thrown out in the Commons.

In 1861, when the Children's Employment Commission was appointed, the climbing boys were included in the inquiry. Lord Shaftesbury brought the whole matter before the House of Lords, to be renewed again and again, and finally to result in the "Chimney-sweepers' Regulation Act, 1864."

But the rejoicings were premature. It was not until ten years later that the abominable system of cruelty was utterly abolished.

Extracts from the Diary:

"*Oct. 9th*, 1872.—Yesterday stirred, after a long interval, by my poor climbing boys. One suffocated in a flue in Staffordshire. The act which forbids the practice intentionally made the evidence difficult. Years of oppression and cruelty have rolled on, and now a death has given me the power of one more appeal to the public through the *Times*."

"*March 20th*, 1873.—Then to House of Lords, to move for reports of coroner's inquest on a poor little chimney-sweeper, seven and a half years old, killed in a flue. So much for my labor on behalf of the climbing boys!" (The *Times* then took up the subject.)

"*April 28th*, 1875.—Again on the rescue of the climbing boys. One's soul is torn by their misery and degradation. Have prepared a bill. God in his mercy, love, and grace be with me! Shall I have, after the manner of men, to contend with beasts? One hundred and two years have elapsed since the good Jonas Hanway brought the brutal iniquity before the public, yet in many parts of England and Ireland it still prevails, with the full knowledge and consent of thousands of all classes."

"*May 12th*.—Last night, Chimney-sweepers' Bill in House of Lords. . . . Was much disheartened at outset. House very inattentive—had twice to implore their 'condescension to hear me.' At last they listened. . . . The *Times*—may the paper be blessed—has assisted me gloriously!"

"*June 4th*.—By God's blessing Chimney-sweepers' Bill passed through committee of House of Lords in the twinkling of an eye,—not a syllable uttered."

"*June 12th*.—Cross, secretary of state for Home Department, has consented to take up the Chimney-sweepers' Bill in House of Commons."

The bill passed into law that session, and thus, after a century of inquiry and legislation, there was rolled away one of the greatest reproaches of the civilization of this country. Lord Shaftesbury had broken the fetters of the most oppressed, degraded, and

tortured children on the face of the earth, and had set them forever free.

[We have anticipated somewhat, in order to finish the subject of "climbing boys."]

The year 1866 opened gloomily for Lord Shaftesbury. Many of the measures on which his heart was set were exposed to peril,—Lord Palmerston, the "man in whom he trusted," was no more; the lawsuits in which he was engaged with Waters, his late steward, and with Mr. Lewer, one of his tenants, had taken an unfavorable turn he had never contemplated; a full investigation into his own financial circumstances caused him much uneasiness. Ever since he began the Factory Question, he had laid out on that and kindred movements large sums of money; for charitable and religious purposes he had been compelled to act in excess of what he was able to afford, lest, by apparent parsimony, he should bring "outward profession" into contempt; and the cottage-building and drainage works at St. Giles's, undertaken to employ labor and to elevate the people and the whole farming system, had, by the mismanagement of his steward, proved ruinous.

. . . . . .

Among the working classes there were none in whom Lord Shaftesbury was more deeply interested than the costermongers of London.

In 1861 Mr. W. J. Orsman, a civil servant, determined to devote his leisure time after office hours to the hard task of evangelizing the benighted costermongers.

The costers are careless and improvident, merry and thoughtless, with little religion and less politeness.

At night, the donkey, the children, the mothers, and fathers—for not uncommonly there are several families in one hovel—all huddled together in the same rooms. The stock-in-trade—fish, fruit, or vegetables—is stored, amidst miscellaneous filth, under the press bedsteads, to be hawked afresh the next day. They go to market very early in summer, and as soon as it is light in winter, purchasing the cheapest stock when there is a glut, or a better commodity when the price is reduced by its remaining on hand. They sell their bargains in the poorer streets, at a small profit, and some make their chief advantage by using false weights and measures.

These people are useful in their way; for it is chiefly through their agency that cheap fruit, fish, and vegetables are brought to the doors of the working classes, who in their absence would seldom be able to benefit by the bounty of nature in abundant seasons.

The parents of Ragged School scholars are mostly described in the lists, giving their occupations as "costermongers." As a body, the costermongers are a remarkably hard-working, if a somewhat loud-voiced and hard-mouthed class. Street life almost necessarily generates coarseness of manners and vehemence in dialect, whether in *gamin* or adult. Their calling is very precarious; for, depending as it does so much on the state of the weather, they sometimes readily realize £2 profit in one week, whilst during the next they do not earn five shillings. Like all classes whose income is uncertain, they are mostly improvident and reckless, and in moments of success indulge in stimulants or gluttony to a fearful extent. Some, of course, are thrifty, and lay up against rainy days, as well as against those stern winter months when both money and vegetables are scarce.

Lord Shaftesbury to Mr. W. J. Orsman.

Bournemouth, Nov. 18th, 1868.

Dear Sir,— You seem to be engaged in a grand work for the benefit of the poorest classes of the metropolis. Mr. Gent, my friend, the secretary of the Ragged School Union, called it "a noble work."

I shall be very happy to aid, so far as I can, such admirable efforts; and, if it can be of any use, to accept the office of president. Your obedient servant,

SHAFTESBURY.

From the day of Lord Shaftesbury's first acquaintance with the costers to the end of his career there was hardly any society in which he took a deeper interest than in Mr. Orsman's Golden Lane Mission. He always delighted to call himself a "coster," and nothing would induce him to lose an opportunity of spending a social evening with his "brethren." One feature of the work was a Barrow and Donkey Club; and the earl immediately enrolled himself a member, and subscribed for a barrow and a donkey. The barrow was a handsome one, and bore upon it the Shaftesbury arms and motto. It was in constant use by men who were steadily saving to buy barrows of their own, and was always a great attraction in the streets.

In a very remarkable manner Lord Shaftesbury threw himself into the work among these strange people, and very speedily gained

their entire confidence; and his speeches to them were marvellously adapted to their appreciation and capacity

He was able to render them important services. In 1872, for example, the vestry of St. Luke's issued an order forbidding costermongers any longer to trade in Whitecross Street. The vestry would, undoubtedly, have carried out its intention, had not Lord Shaftesbury interposed on behalf of the costers. The joy of the people, when it became known that the parish magistrates had relented, was unbounded.

One result of the excitement of that time was the establishment of "The London Union of General Dealers." The meetings are held in the Golden Lane Mission Room, and everything touching the general welfare of the costermonger fraternity is there discussed.

At one of the meetings, when the threatened evil was under discussion, Lord Shaftesbury told the men that at any time when they had grievances which he could assist them to get redressed, they should write to him, and he would not fail to respond.

"But where shall we write to?" asked one of them.

"Address your letter to me at Grosvenor Square, and it will probably reach me," he replied; "but, if after my name you put 'K. G.* and Coster,' there will be no doubt that I shall get it."

One of the strangest ceremonials that ever took place at a public meeting occurred in 1875 in connection with this society. Lord Shaftesbury, who was president of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, had taken a deep interest in the costermongers' donkeys. It was proverbial, at one time, that both the donkeys and ponies were shamefully ill-used; but by education, exhortation, and by the institution of donkey shows and prizes and a variety of other means, the men of Golden Lane had come to take a pride in their animals, and had found that kind and just treatment was the wisest policy. With twenty-four hours' rest on Sunday, the donkeys would do thirty miles a day without exhaustion, whereas without it they did not do an average of more than fifteen.

In recognition of his kind services the costers invited Lord Shaftesbury to meet them in their hall to receive a presentation. Over a thousand costers with their friends were there, and the platform was graced by many ladies and gentlemen, when a handsome donkey, profusely decorated with ribbons, was led onto the platform and presented as a token of esteem to the chairman. Lord Shaftesbury good-humoredly vacated the chair, and made way for the new arrival, and then, putting his arm round the animal's neck, returned thanks in a short speech, in which, however, there was a ring of pathos as he said, "When I have passed away from this life, I desire to have no more said of me than that I have done my duty, as this poor donkey has done his, with patience and unmurmuring resignation." The donkey was then led down the steps of the platform, and Lord Shaftesbury remarked, "I hope the reporters of the press will state that, the donkey having vacated the chair, the place was taken by Lord Shaftesbury."—*The "Life of the Earl of Shaftesbury," by Hodder.*

* "K. G." stands for Knight of the Garter. Lord Shaftesbury, after once refusing the order of the Garter,—one of the most coveted and prized in England,—had been persuaded by Lord Palmerston to accept it. One objection was that Lord Shaftesbury could not afford the heavy fees, but this was in some way arranged by Lord Palmerston.

LETTERS OF A SISTER.

To her Brother, James Freeman Clarke.

JULY 19, 1837 (*continued from November Number*).

Mother went on Wednesday to the exhibition of the Theological School, and was present at the meeting of the Philanthropic Society. Mr. Ellis here distinguished himself by asserting that it was of no use for ministers to go to the West, since so many had gone and returned; and he was sustained by Russell Sullivan, and opposed powerfully by Mr. Pierpont. They say Osgood spoke admirably at the May meeting of the American Unitarian Association, justly qualifying what Mr. Briggs and others, too, enthusiastically asserted. It is said that he gave no satisfaction at the West. I have taken pains to do him justice, as far as I could, but that is little.

Who do you think I find a constant visitor at our house but Mr. Bowen, who wrote the review of "Nature"?* He is what one would expect from that production. I was afraid I should get into a contention with him, and, sure enough, he began to abuse Mr. Alcott. I could not be silent, and at

* Mr. Emerson's "Nature," doubtless.

last, as the climax, he said he should fear that all the children educated by Mr. Alcott would resemble Mr. Emerson. I assured him that the best friend of Mr. Alcott could desire nothing more, so we agreed to waive the discussion.

Cousin Sarah made sad havoc among our young Unitarian clergy, and I fear she thinks it would be doing God service to break all their hearts. She has mighty winning ways with her. Mr. —— is quite captivated among the rest. Louisa Freeman desires to thank you for sending her the *Messenger* all winter. Everybody I see inquires when you are coming, old Judge Davis particularly.

30*th*.—We were to have had a picnic party yesterday in the woods near the Baptist Pond, and have been all the week looking forward to it and preparing for it; but the night before it began to rain for the first time this three weeks, and continued all day yesterday, so we expect to have it take place to-morrow instead. —— has gone to New York, and Olivia Sullivan is staying with us.

I have been much interested in Miss Martineau's book. It gives great offence here, as you may suppose. I find it delightful to hear the words of so plain-spoken an individual, though some of it is offensive, such as the way she speaks of Mr. Alcott and *perhaps* the way she speaks of Mr. Everett. I do not quite know whether I dislike that, however. She seems to me a little wild upon the political non-existence of women, and quite too confident and dogmatical in her conclusions; but the admirable, truth-telling way in which it is written and the acute observations she makes, the descriptions of natural scenery, render it the finest book upon this country that has ever been made, in my opinion. How uncommon it is to find one so entirely fearless in speaking what she thinks as Miss Martineau! You must let me know if you cannot get it, and I will send it to you.

Have you seen Breckinridge's History of the War of 1812 and Armstrong's Notices of the War of 1812, both of which contain unfair statements of the conduct of grandfather, and the latter of which is quite abusive. In it, however, every one else is abused. Sam was going to write a review of it, but found that in two years no notice had been taken of it by any one. He thought it would be best to let it sink into oblivion without disturbance. Breckinridge's, however, should be noticed. There are those two with Hoffman's "Winter in the West" and Grimshaw's History of the United States which have spoken unfairly on that subject. I was sorry that I had none of the Memoirs with me to put on board the steamboats. They would be read there, if anywhere.

August 2.—We had our picnic party yesterday in the Baptist Pond woods, and such a scene of mirth and jollity was rarely witnessed there before (if ever)! We had John Sullivan, and with his Yankee stories he had nearly been the death of Judge Davis and Mr. Francis, who laughed immoderately. The story of Captain Rice's treat was most nearly fatal to the judge, and the story of the typhus fever convulsed Drs. Osgood and Hosmer. We went in the boat across the pond, and Mr. Francis and Sam rowed, and the day ended in pleasure as it began.

If I do not send this letter to-day, I fear I shall never send it at all.

Yours ever,

SARAH.

DECEMBER 16, 1837.

My dear James,—I have been trying to write to you for some days, but many things have prevented.

I have a curious letter before me from a Mr. Greaves to Mr. Alcott, directed, "Mr. Alcott, Academy, Boston, America." He seems far more of a mystic than our friend. Let me give you a short extract:—

"Some strong interior visitations came over me in the year 1817 which withdrew me from the world in a considerable degree, and I was enabled to yield myself up to Love's own manner of acting, regardless of all consequences. Soon after this time I met with an account of the Spirit's work in and by the late venerable Pestalozzi, which so interested me that I proceeded at once to visit him in Switzerland, and remained with him in holy fellowship four years. I was working with considerable success amongst the various students in that country, when the prejudices of the self-made wise and powerful men became jealous of my influence, and I was advised to return to England, which I did, and here have been teaching in various ways ever since, from the deep centre to the circumference." He remarks, too, that "receptive beings have hitherto, however, been but limited, and those who *retain* still less." But he thinks he sees tokens of the Love-seed beginning to germinate. He ends with pro-

posing to cross the Atlantic and spend a few weeks with Mr Alcott, and asks him twenty-nine questions. Mr. Alcott sent him word to come by all means. Mrs. Shaw was telling me that they (Mr. and Mrs. Alcott) have suffered much from poverty, but they bear it with heroic fortitude and constancy.

We received the other day your history of the troubles with your society. I am very glad that you acted as you did. I have no doubt that some of them supposed that nothing would induce you to leave them. I can easily guess who were the fault-finders. Do send home your letter to them as soon as possible. It is almost a pity that they did not accept your resignation. Would it not be a good plan, next spring, to beg them to send for another minister to take your place at the end of the year.?

I have heard two of Mr. Emerson's lectures on Human Culture. He insists strenuously upon the duty of every one to secure for himself that occupation and that situation which he feels he was made to do and fill, and is sure that such is the first and highest duty. He spoke of the difficulties that lie in the way of such a choice, principally the opposition of friends, the prejudices of society, which are against hand labor. In his view the use of the hands is necessary to the development of character, and he enlarges much upon the necessity and dignity of working with the hands. The highest and primary use of this sort is that it makes us acquainted with the physical laws of nature, and unfolds for us the meaning of the "sacred cypher," which is his favorite term for the laws of nature in their outward action, which lead us through the mystic web of creation, "from the circumference to the deep centre." "How helpless as well as how ignorant he remains who cannot make his fire, shovel snow, drive a horse, and do those other things which he requires for the comfort of his daily life, and which he must either do himself or get another to do for him!" Then he comes to the choice of an occupation for life, premising that to each individual there is a calling for which his natural organization fits him, and in doing which he is happier than he could be in idleness, though he be the laziest mortal living. He spoke of the social prejudices which exist against mechanical occupations, and lamented that few young men had the courage to break through these trammels imposed by the wishes of friends and relatives and the opinions of the world; that they forget how much is gained rather than lost in escaping from conventional restraints. "A few shillings a day will supply food, clothing, house, and fire, and that is all a man needs, and those are easily enough earned, and he has leisure left to do that which nature calls him to." I thought of your friend, Horace Barbour: there was a great deal that was very fine and that cannot be recalled. His discourses are like diamonds, which are worthless unless you receive them whole.

Margaret has been in town last week and came near coming out here to stay with me, but there came a snow-storm which prevented her. Did you see her letter to Miss Martineau about her book? It was, I think, the severest thing I have seen said about her.

We have got the December number.* I like your notice of Miss Martineau very much, and it is a fine number, all the better for having so few articles. You are pretty severe on Bishop Smith and more so on Episcopacy. I do not like very well what you say of the quarrels of the ministers, etc., for you have no right to know it. It savors of gossip. I mean about H. and D. But the rest of the article I like much. Pray, my dear James, try to keep clear of personalities, if you love me.

Next Monday is Christmas. Do you remember last year, and those dear children at Cincinnati dancing about before daybreak with their good wishes? If you go there this winter, tell them they ought not to give up an old friend.

I saw E. H. the other morning, and had a long talk with her about her engagement. She has genuine simplicity of character, and I like her better than ever. It is a real attachment, without any blindness, at least on her side. I hope and feel sure that Mr. B. will be all the better as well as happier for being connected with her. Mr. Peabody's popularity increases, and they talk of building a church for him. It is many weeks since we have heard from Chicago. Have you had letters lately? Not even any of Abraham's business letters. What can they be about?

Did you get the papers telling about the Faneuil Hall meeting? Don't forget to send home the letter you wrote the Society, for I wish much to see it, and all the rest want to see it very much.

* Of the *Messenger*.

Mr. Ripley says Mr. Emerson took the idea from your suggestion at Concord, that missionary enterprises are a proof of the progress of society. He came out with it in his first lecture, saying that in the early ages of the world people thought a shining social state the thing to be desired, but now the object most sought is the culture of the individual, as proved in various ways, and that among the rest.

THE HOUSEHOLD.

Dear Miss C.—I like the new departure of exchanging economical ideas in *The Cheerful Letter*. Here is a very cheap pudding, very easily made, which I consider a great improvement upon the old-fashioned bread pudding.

Save all the crusts and stale pieces, and put into a pudding-dish. When the dish is half full, cover with hot water. Let it soak until all is soft, then drain off nearly all the water. To a pint of milk add one egg, well beaten, or, if you use more than a pint, add a teaspoonful of cornstarch, dissolved in some of the milk, salt to cover the point of a penknife, sugar and spice to taste. Bake quickly and serve cold. It will be a soft custard, and no child will refuse to eat such a pudding. I have known persons who "could not bear bread pudding" to eat it, and say that they did not know that there was any bread in it.

Some time after a party or other social occasion there are scraps of cake of various kinds left. Instead of throwing them away, cut them into cubes half an inch square or larger. Cover with hot boiled custard, and allow it to cool. It will make a tempting and palatable dessert.

The same idea may be varied if there happen to be different kinds of fruit left. An orange, two pears, one or two peaches, a banana, and a sauce plate full of strawberries make a delicious combination. The fruit should of course be pared and sweetened. K. L. W.

The Editor hopes that others will send notes and letters for this department. Not only recipes for the table will be welcome, but anything in the line of household economy,—anything that tends to smooth some of the difficulties of housekeeping. L. F. C.

THE AMUSEMENT COLUMN.

[Address everything relating to the Amusement Column to Miss Kate L. Watson, Post-office Box 57, Worcester, Mass. Contributors are requested to write on one side of the paper only. Write name and address *plainly* (not necessarily for publication), and send the answers to the puzzles on a separate slip of paper.]

I.

An Alphabetical Puzzle.

The figures refer to corresponding letters in the alphabet.

7, 18, 5, 5, 20, 9, 14, 7 dear friends. The 13, 15, 14, 20, 8, 19 have slipped by so 6, 1, 19, 20 that we 23, 15, 14, 4, 5, 18, 5, 4 if there would be 5, 14, 15, 21, 7, 8 of them to 12, 1, 19, 20 through the 25, 5, 1, 18; but here we are at the 5, 19, 4 of 2, 15, 20, 8, both having lasted just long enough. We wish 25, 15, 21, 1, 12, 12, a 13, 5, 18, 18, 25, 3, 8, 18, 9, 19, 20, 13, 1, 19, and 1, 8, 1, 16, 16, 25, 14, 5, 23, 25, 5, 1, 18, and proceed to business.

II.

Omitted Word Puzzle.

Ye — have — another,
Or — friend — brother,
— your scorning —
Let — against — sinning
— their strife —
Beneath the — bough.
—*Charles Mackay.*

III.

A Biblical Riddle.

A question I will ask of thee,
Come answer if you please,
Tell in what chapter there's a verse
With three times fifty T's?

The name of the book that it is in is a woman's name, and the book does not contain the words "Lord" nor "God."—*From an old Book of Riddles.*

IV.

Charades.

Through my first unceasing flow
Mingled sounds of joy and woe;
In my second, newly made,
Thousands every year are laid;
In my whole,—men never jest,—
Vows are made and sins confessed
—*Selected.*

V.

Square Word.

A measure of land. 2. Worshipped in India and China. 3. A rich soil. 4. Graceful shade-trees.

VI.

Letter Puzzle.

To a letter of the alphabet prefix a garden vegetable and make a lumberman's tool. 2. To the same letter prefix a surname and make a social function. 3. Prefix a color and make something found on the dinner table. Prefix an ocean and make a surname. —*The Invalid Lady.*

1. We thank the lady who sent us No. IV. with several others, and would like to hear from her again. The editor of the Amusement Column wrote to her, but received no answer. Please send self-addressed envelope.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN NOVEMBER NUMBER.

I. A bird's nest in the carcass of a horse. There were five young birds and one egg.

II. Thanksgiving.

III. Furnace (fern ace).

IV. A N N A.
N O O N.
N O O N.
A N N A.

V. 1. Adam Bede. 2. Six to Sixteen. 3. A White Heron. 4. All in a Garden Green. 5. Fair Italy. 6. Kenilworth.

VI. 1. Dates. 2. Spice Wood (would). 3. A prickly pear (pair).

THE POETRY OF HOUSEWORK.

"Poetry of housework? There is no poetry of housework," a very tired woman said to me the other day. She felt wearily that it was nothing but drudgery. Indeed, I find that many women regard it in the same light, and look askance at the title of that beautiful sermon, "Blessed be Drudgery."

I began to do my own housework when I was over thirty years old, and with a family of three children. The multifarious cares and duties, and the incessant calls upon one's time and strength and mind, seemed overwhelming at first.

I soon found that, if I thought only of the dusting or scrubbing or cooking that was in hand at the moment, the work became irksome. One morning, when the dusting was very prosaic, my spirit revolted; and the fine stanza, "Dust thou art to dust returnest, was not spoken of the soul," came to my mind, and comforted me at once. "Who sweeps a room as in God's cause makes that and the action fine," always elevates me while I wield the broom.

The early morning work of putting the house to rights, after the scurrying off to school and office, makes one remember that "Order is Heaven's first law"; and I feel very executive and creative, and closely akin to the plan of the universe when I evolve order out of chaos.

Making the beds brings on a tuneful phase; and "Awake my soul, stretch every nerve," gives plenty of energy in plumping up the pillows, while the hymn,—

"In the morning I will pray
For God's guidance in the day,"

puts one in readiness to meet many troubles in a calm spirit.

Cleaning the bath-room was a task I was sure would defy poetry; but I remembered that "Cleanliness is next to Godliness," which dignified the scrubbing at once, and there was often occasion to think of the "Architects of Fate,"—

"You can do your work as well,
Both the unseen and the seen;
Make the place where gods may dwell,
Beautiful, entire, and clean."

Polishing the silver and brasses brings to mind dear, pompous Sir Joseph Porter, K. C. B., "who polished up the handle of the big front door" so "carefullee." Who can be grumpy over a disagreeable job when she is singing that?

The *bête-noir* of every woman is the cleaning of oil lamps. I have never seen one who did not look at me in amazed and uncomprehending disgust when I confessed to liking it. The whole task is illumined to me by the remembrance of that beautiful story of the blind piper in George MacDonald's "Malcolm," who goes quietly about from house to house in the little hamlet, sitting in the chimney corner, filling, cleaning, and making bright the lamps for his more fortunate neighbors, who could profit by the light.

Whatever work is on hand, the essential

thing is the spirit in which it is done; and I keep Ruskin's words ever before me: "It is not thy works, but the spirit thou workest in that can have continuance." And the spirit is indicated in this phrase, "Do it cheerfully, like a child of God."

This fall, when the winter clothes had to be taken out of the camphor trunks, and the strangling odor caught me by the throat, I realized that I was following a time-honored custom; for the "woman whose price was far above rubies" had to provide for the cold also, for "she is not afraid of the snow for her household, for all her household are clothed with scarlet."

Indeed, all housework and care of children is ennobled for all time by this grand model of womanhood. I hope that the "higher education of women" and the "higher criticism of the Bible" will never dim the beauty of this priceless woman, whose portrait has glowed like a ruby for so many centuries, "whose children arise up and call her blessed, her husband, also, and he praiseth her."

Givers of books are reminded that only books of an instructive or wholesome nature should be offered in the Book Club. Classics, educational works, and standard novels are always acceptable. Do not offer odd numbers of periodicals, but send them directly to one of the many stations where they are acceptable.

He who is plenteously provided for from within needs but little from without.—*Goethe.*

Believe me, the talent of success is nothing more than doing what you can do well.—*Longfellow.*

Mrs. C. S. Stowell, Magnolia, Boulder County, Colorado, asks for a French Grammar, French and English Dictionary, and a First French Reader, for the use of a young friend.

N. B.—Before sending write either to Mrs. Stowell or to the Book Club Secretary, else Mrs. Stowell may receive many copies of each kind of book.

A soul occupied with great ideas best performs small duties.—*James Martineau.*

IMPORTANT NOTICES.

The Cheerful Letter Exchange will arrange for lessons by correspondence in such subjects as are desired by those without school facilities, who would like to take up a course of study in this manner. It is believed that much practical help can thus be given.

Will those who would like to receive such instruction send their requests to Mrs. C. L. Stebbins, 52 Fayette Street, Cambridge, Mass., stating the subjects in which they wish instruction?

THE ATTENTION OF ALL READERS OF "THE CHEERFUL LETTER" IS CALLED TO THE FOLLOWING NOTICE:—

It is contrary to the rules of the Cheerful Letter Exchange to allow any one to make use of our paper by addressing letters, asking for money, clothing, or other articles, to those whose names are printed in the paper. This prohibition includes requests to borrow money and the offering of articles for sale. The name of any person who infringes this rule will be dropped from our list; and any one who receives a request of this description is desired by our Executive Committee to return no answer, but to enclose the letter at once to Mrs. W. B. Nichols.

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Those not able to subscribe for the paper, but desiring to receive it, may do so by writing to Mrs. Catlin, as above. Please give full name and address. Also send name of minister as reference. Some of our members take the paper in order to send it to those who are not able to subscribe for it.